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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: QUARTET MEETING IN US/MECCA MEETING

[1](#)1. Summary: "Al-Khaleej" considers the Quartet meeting in Washington an American attempt to reinforce that the committee's positions do not deviate from the American position. A columnist in "Al-Ittihad"

criticized the fact that there is no tolerance among Muslims towards the others and called on them to accept others regardless of their beliefs or religious affiliation. A columnist in "Al-Khaleej" hopes that the upcoming meeting in Mecca will put an end to the inter-Palestinian killings and achieve Palestinian reconciliation. End summary.

[1](#)2. Under the headline "American Quartet committee", Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 90,000) editorialized on 2/5:

"The recent Quartet committee meeting in Washington was merely an American attempt to recall that the committee's position does not deviate from the American position of keeping a tight siege on the Palestinian people and sticking to the proclaimed conditions necessary for the resumption of pledged international aid. It seems that when the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called for a Quartet meeting, she was aiming to reassure herself that the positions of the committee's members regarding the Palestinian cause remains confined to the American and Israeli positions and to the ways of dealing with that cause. Evidently she can now rest assured..."

[1](#)3. Under the headline "Social tolerance is the solution", a columnist, Dr. Abdul-Hameed Al-Ansari, wrote a 02/06 op-ed in Abu Dhabi-based Arabic semi-official daily "Al-Ittihad" (circulation 65,000):

"Social tolerance can hardly be seen in the lives of Arabs and Muslims. This view is not unfair because this is the reality of this nation, regardless of the allegations that have been ranting in the public, as evidenced by the laws and religious studies... Clearly, the virtue of social tolerance fell for good from the contemporary lexicon of Arabs and Muslims lives. All this is because of the phenomenon of religious extremism spreading in the lives of Arab societies, which in turn prompts others - as a reaction to this extremism - to become extremists in order to deal with this scourge... The only basis for the theory of social tolerance is to accept one another as they are, regardless of their identification or classification as a precondition, and as a human being first and foremost... There is no room for Arabs and Muslims to solve their problems but to accept and adopt the terms of Human Rights conventions against racism that are laid out by the UN. These conventions mark the solutions reached after the long experience of many dark European decades."

¶4. Under the headline "Mecca Meeting", Jaafar Mohammed Ahmed, a columnist, wrote a 02/06 op-ed in Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 90,000):

"Saudi King's invitation to open a dialogue at the House of God in Mecca should leave the Palestinian factions with only one option: success, failure is not accepted. The leaders of Hamas and Fatah are required to meet in Mecca today to immediately stop the Palestinian bloodshed and direct all efforts towards Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The meeting is an opportunity towards starting a successful national dialogue, for reaching a consensus on controversial issues, and for forming a national unity government. Leading figures and cadres of Fatah and Hamas should shoulder their responsibility in stopping the bloodshed and putting the past behind them. Reaching for permanent, not temporary, harmony, through dialogue is the only way to promote Palestinian unity. We all hope that everybody will come to Mecca today with open hearts and hands extended towards reconciliation and agreement on all pending issues to spare people the scourge of strife and to stop Palestinian bloodshed."

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